

Message Text

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PAGE 01 PARIS 21558 121520Z

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ACTION EUR-25

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FM AMEMBASSY PARIS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2247

INFO AMEMBASSY BONN

C O N F I D E N T I A L PARIS 21558

FOR EUR/WE

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, PGOV, FR

SUBJECT: BIOGRAPHIC DATA: MADAME JEAN SAUVAGNARGUES

REF: A) BONN 8453; B) TUNIS A-90 (MAY 5, 1970)

SUMMARY: THE FRENCH FOREIGN MINISTER'S WIFE IS A SHY, DISCREET PERSON WHO PREFERS THE COMPANY OF HER CHILDREN OR A GOOD BOOK TO GREAT INVOLVEMENT IN SOCIAL LIFE. EMBASSY PARIS SPOKE WITH AMBASSADOR HILLENBRAND ON SEPTEMBER 11; HIS COMMENTS ARE REFLECTED IN THE INFORMATION BELOW. END SUMMARY.

1. ALTHOUGH SOMETIMES DESCRIBED AS ALOOF AND FORMAL, MME SAUVAGNARGUES, THE FORMER LISE MARIE L'EVEQUE, IS MORE PROBABLY A SHY PERSON. SHE SPARKLES, HOWEVER, IN RATHER FORMAL SETTINGS WHERE HER FRENCH ABILITY TO TURN A PHRASE CAN BE PUT TO BEST ADVANTAGE' AND AT THE SAME TIME SHE CAN AVOID INTIMATE, PERSONAL INVOLVEMENT. IN 1970 EMBASSY TUNIS SAID THAT SHE "MANAGES QUITE WELL IN ENGLISH" AND COMMENTED THAT SHE WAS SAID TO SPEAK GOOD GERMAN, BUT SHE DOES NOT CURRENTLY PRACTICE EITHER LANGUAGE. SHE IS SAID TO ENJOY AN EXTREMELY CLOSE RELATIONSHIP WITH HER HUSBAND AND THEIR FOUR CHILDREN.

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PAGE 02 PARIS 21558 121520Z

2. LITTLE IS KNOWN ABOUT HER PAST. MME SAUVAGNARGUES WORKED FOR THE FRENCH FOREIGN OFFICE BEFORE HER MARRIAGE AND ONE STORY HAS IT THAT THE SAUVAGNARGUES MET WHILE BOTH WERE SERVING IN THE CENTRAL EUROPEAN OFFICE OF THE QUAL. SHE IS SAID TO HAVE SERVED IN AT LEAST TWO FOREIGN POSTS. BUT WE DO NOT KNOW IF SHE HAS EVER VISITED THE UNITED STATES.

3. SHOULD THE DEPARTMENT ARRANGE A PROGRAM FOR HER DURING THE FOREIGN MINISTER'S FORTHCOMING US VISIT, AMBASSADOR HILLENBRAND SUGGESTS THE FOLLOWING CONSIDERATIONS BE KEPT IN MIND: MME SAUVAGNARGUES IS INTERESTED IN MODERN ART, FINE CUISINE AND GOOD WINES (ABOUT WHICH SHE IS QUITE KNOWLEDGEABLE). SHE IS A PRACTICING CATHOLIC WHO ATTENDS MASS EVERY SUNDAY. SHE IS A WOMAN OF LITTLE PRETENSE AND DEPARTMENT MAY WISH TO INVOLVE HER IN PLANNING HER OWN PROGRAM AT AN EARLIER STAGE THAN USUAL.

4. EMBASSY HAS NO BIOGRAPHIC INFORMATION ON MME BERNARD DESTREMAU.
IRWIN

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